THE
Dan Smoot Report

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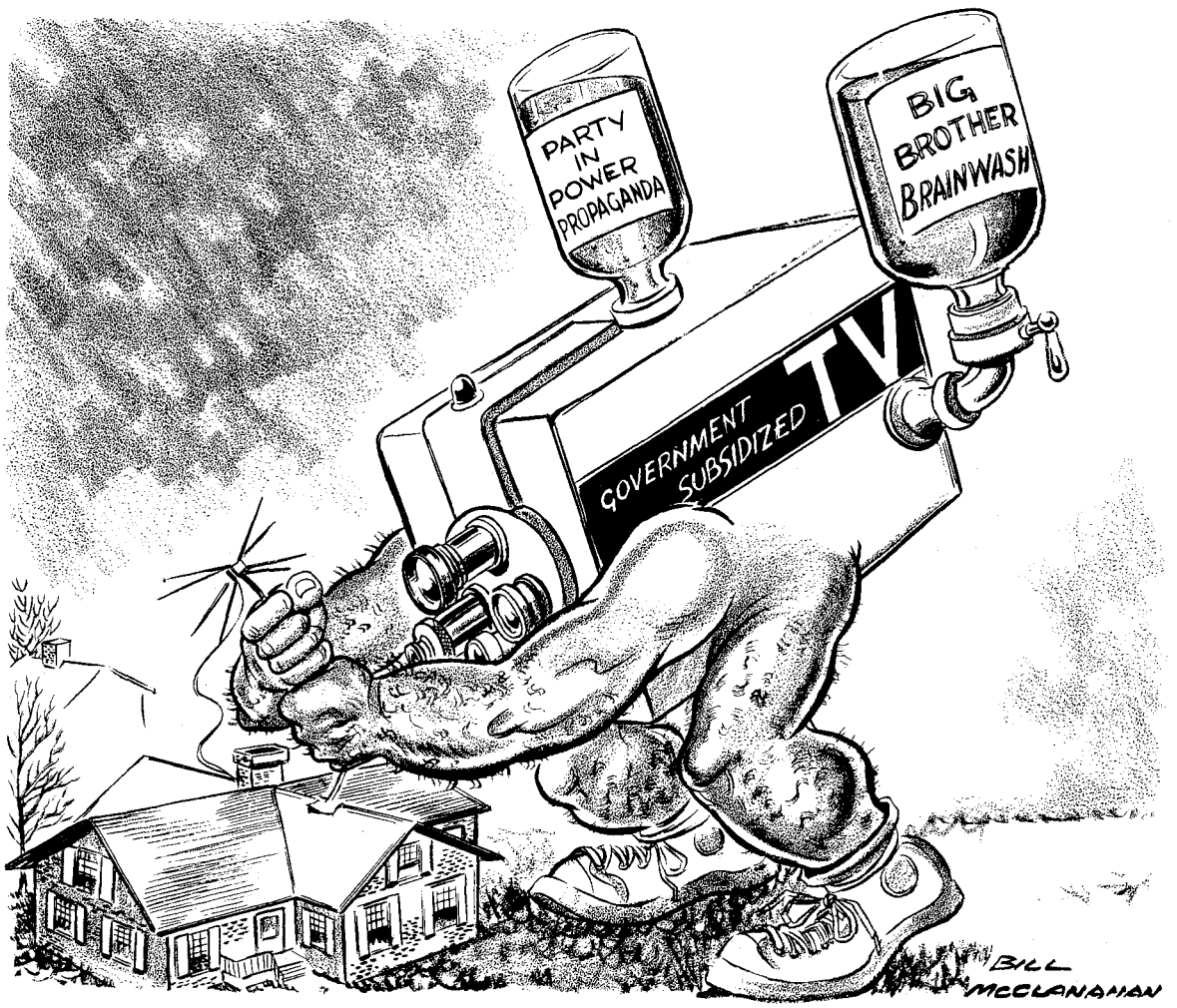
DAN SMOOT

EDUCATION OR INDOCTRINATION?



Cartoon by Bill McClanahan, Dallas Morning News *Staff Cartoonist — Reprinted with permission.*

THE DAN SMOOT REPORT is published weekly by The Dan Smoot Report, Inc., Box 9538, Dallas, Texas 75214 (office at 6441 Gaston Ave.). Subscriptions: $18.00 for 2 years; $10.00, 1 year; $6.00, 6 months; first class, $12.50 a year; airmail, $14.50. Dan Smoot was born in Missouri, reared in Texas. With BA and MA degrees from SMU (1938 and 1940), he joined the Harvard faculty (1941) as a Teaching Fellow, doing graduate work in American civilization. From 1942 to 1951, he was an FBI agent; from 1951 to 1955, a commentator on national radio and television. In 1955, he started his present independent, free-enterprise business: publishing this REPORT and abbreviating it each week for radio and TV broadcasts available for commercial sponsorship by business firms.

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In 1951, the Federal Communications Commission set aside 242 television channels for noncommercial broadcasting. The first educational tv station went on the air in May, 1953, at Houston, Texas.[1]

In 1962, Congress enacted the Educational Facilities Act, providing 32 million tax dollars, on a matching-funds basis, for the development and construction of educational television facilities, over a period of 5 years.

At the beginning of this year, there were 124 educational tv stations on the air, 54 under construction.[1]

In 1965, the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television was created. James R. Killian, Jr. (a member of the Council on Foreign Relations) was chairman. The Commission submitted a report on January 25, 1967, recommending a national network of 380 educational tv stations, to be locally owned, but functionally linked in a national system, and directed by a federally chartered corporation. The Commission suggested extension of the Educational Television Facilities Act of 1962 (due to expire June 30, 1967), to provide tax money for the acquisition and construction of transmission facilities; and it recommended a federal excise tax on tv sets as a permanent means of financing educational tv.

In a message to Congress on February 28, 1967, President Johnson asked for a Public Television Act of 1967, to implement major recommendations of the Carnegie Commission.

The President asked Congress to appropriate $10.5 million in fiscal 1968 for construction of radio and tv facilities (more than 3 times as much as was appropriated under the Educational Facilities Act in fiscal 1967). He demanded creation of a Corporation for Public Television, to support noncommercial television and radio. He asked that the Corporation be funded with 9 million tax dollars for its first year, saying he will make proposals next year for long-term financing. He said the board of directors of the corporation should be composed of 15 members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

Senator Warren G. Magnuson introduced the Public Television Act of 1967 (S 1160). The Senate passed the bill by voice vote on May 17.

This is clearly thought-control legislation; and it is clearly unconstitutional, because nothing in the Constitution authorizes such federal activity. Yet, it is likely to become law, virtually unnoticed by the public, because it has had little opposition in Congress.

I am not opposed to educational tv. I am opposed to unconstitutional, tax-supported broadcasting which will use tax money to support propaganda, political ideologies, and cultural and sociological viewpoints that are repugnant to some taxpayers.

Of the 124 educational tv stations now operating, 21 are school stations—licensed to public school systems, primarily for use in elementary and secondary education; 35 are licensed to colleges and universities; 27 are licensed to state educational agencies and are used mainly to serve primary and secondary education; 40 are licensed to nonprofit corporations and operate as community stations, specializing in public affairs and cultural programs; 1 is licensed to the City of New York and operates as a community station.

The stations produce locally about 15% of the programs they broadcast; about 20% of their programs are supplied by agencies of the federal government; 15% are supplied by industrial and commercial companies. The major supplier of educational tv programs—furnishing about 50% of all programs throughout the nation — is National Educational Television (NET), a tax-exempt organization with headquarters in New York City. NET produces some of the programs it distributes, obtains others from various sources — most of them from abroad, especially from the British Broadcasting Corporation. NET will be a principal beneficiary of the tax money appropriated under the Public Television Act.

Most of the 124 educational tv stations in operation are affiliated with NET. Because they are heavily dependent on it for programs, they are, for the most part, deeply influenced by it;

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and NET is controlled and operated by totalitarian liberals (one-world socialists), whose views on government, communism, and morals are offensive to Americans who cherish traditional American values and constitutional principles.

On June 17, 1966, the *New York Independent* published an article by Lois I. Nichols, discussing a British Broadcasting Corporation film distributed in the United States by National Educational Television:

"The program . . . which might have been entitled *Problems of Perverts* . . . [showed] perverts passing before the unctuously sympathetic interviewer, confiding incredibly intimate details of their abnormal love lives . . . . a program devoted to degenerates discussing their depravity."

In 1965, NET distributed to its affiliates a one-hour program called *Three Faces of Cuba*—which praised Castro's regime, belittled the role of American investment capital in Cuba prior to Castro. In answer to criticism, John White, NET president, said he would not hesitate to distribute such films in the future.

In February, 1967, NET distributed *Ninety Days*, a British Broadcasting Corporation film which featured Ruth First. Miss First denounced the government of the Republic of South Africa, for ordering her arrest. The BBC program did not reveal (and NET in distributing the program did not disclose) that Ruth First was an active member, organizer, and agitator of the communist party in South Africa. When asked (by William Loeb, publisher of *Union Leader*, Manchester, New Hampshire) whether NET would convey to its affiliates facts about Ruth First's background, David Dixon (director of public affairs for NET) replied:

"It doesn't make any difference whether Miss First is a Communist."[2]

News in Perspective is one of the most influential programs distributed by National Educational Television. It is produced twice a month by NET in association with *The New York Times*. *Times* officials give analyses of major news developments.[3] Herbert Matthews (whose articles in the *Times* created the image of Castro as the George Washington of Cuba) and Harrison Salisbury (whose reports from North Vietnam gave an enormous, worldwide boost to communist propaganda) reflect typical *New York Times* slanting of the news.

The commercial broadcasting networks and most independent stations are controlled by people who—because of their own convictions or because they fear reprisals by the Federal Communications Commission — will permit little broadcasting by constitutional conservatives criticizing the unconstitutional, socialist programs of the federal government. The Public Television Act of 1967 will make matters worse. A chain of educational tv stations, financed with tax money distributed by federal bureaucrats and controlled by presidential appointees, will soon become a propaganda arm of the administration in power—or, even worse, a tax-supported agency for disseminating the views of the appointed board members who, as the law is written, are responsible to no one.

Here is Senator Strom Thurmond's analysis of the bill:

"The main purpose of the Corporation created by the bill is to assist in, encourage, and, most importantly, finance, the production of educational and cultural programs to be offered free of charge to educational television stations around the country.

"The principle underlying the creation of a publicly financed and governmentally controlled radio and television network raises very serious questions of basic constitutional policy. Nowhere in the Constitution is there to be found any authority for the central government to enter this field of activity.

"This proposal represents a radical new departure in the government's role both toward the communications media of radio and television, and toward education. For the first time, the government is to be significantly involved in the

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preparation of programs for viewing by the public. In addition, since the programs to be written, produced, and financed under the direction of the Corporation are billed as educational efforts, this is tantamount to the government being responsible for the contents of textbooks. The potential for using the broad discretion granted to the Corporation in the name of academic freedom, to be used to distribute their own brand of propaganda, is enormous . . . .

"It is true that the sponsors have written certain safeguards into the bill. For instance, all partisan politics have been carefully excluded from the programs prepared by or for the Corporation. This is commendable, but it is not enough. While there may be no partisanship in the sense of obviously favoring one political party over the other, there can, and most probably will be, an obvious philosophical or ideological bias.

"The very procedure resorted to, in order to insulate the Corporation from political influence, creates the opportunity for the Corporation, through its board of directors and staff, to sell their own philosophical or ideological viewpoints. The board of directors, once appointed and confirmed, are free agents, in every sense of the word. They will owe initial allegiance to the President who appointed them. Since the term of office is six years, they may feel no special compulsion to follow his wishes. The films produced under their supervision need meet no popular demand test.

"The creation of even one mode of the news media which is wholly, or even partially, dependent upon financial support from the government is an unwholesome and dangersome precedent.

"The potential use of this corporation to promote ideological viewpoints of a particular persuasion is immense. No man, or group of men, should be endowed with the powers thus created."

Please write, or wire, your U. S. Representative, urging him to vote against the Public Television Act.

BALANCE, NOT IMAGE

Recently, Mr. William Penn Patrick, President of Holiday Magic, 616 Canal Street, San Rafael, California, tried to buy time to sponsor my once-a-week, 15-minute radio broadcast, on both MBS and ABC radio networks, but was turned down. I mentioned this in the May 8, 1967, *Report*, saying:

"I have heard, in a roundabout way, that MBS and ABC radio officials refused my broadcast because they think it would damage their image with the public."

On May 17, 1967, Mr. Robert R. Pauley, President, ABC radio network, wrote me saying:

"I have received various letters, evidently from the readers of your report, objecting to ABC News' decision not to carry the Dan Smoot Report on our radio network . . . . I want you to understand clearly that our decision was most decidedly not based on the reason quoted in so many of the letters, to wit . . . it would 'not present the right image for our company.'

"In this respect, I must ask you to print a retraction and an apology to me and ABC . . . .

"The ABC News Department is a separate and autonomous division serving both Radio and TV Networks and influenced by neither. As you well know, the ABC Radio Network has maintained a balance of news commentary expressed by Paul Harvey, Alex Dreier and Edward P. Morgan, all of whom are under contract to ABC. The addition of your program at this time, with its point of view, might very well affect this balance."

FOOTNOTES

(1) "Text Of President's Message On Education And Health," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, March 3, 1967, pp. 316-21; "Big Push Expected In 1967 For Educational TV," *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, February 17, 1967, pp. 251-3

(2) "Operation Brainwash," *Human Events*, April 29, 1967, p. 4

(3) "2D Time Program To Be Added In Fall," *The New York Times*, June 7, 1966, p. 79

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